

An Earnest
EXHORTATION
TO
HOUSEKEEPERS,
To Maintain
FAMILY INSTRUCTION
And DEVOTION;
WITH
DAILY PRAYERS
FOR
MORNING and EVENING.

The FIFTEENTH EDITION, Corrected.

L O N D O N:

Printed for JOHN RIVINGTON, Bookseller to
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in French

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An Earnest

EXHORTATION

TO

Housekeepers.



*To the Parents and Masters of
Families.*

THE great Decay of Piety in
this corrupt and degenerate
Age, is very much owing to
the shameful Neglect of many
Parents and Masters, in not instructing
their

their Children and those under their Charge, in the Principles of Religion. Were Childrens Minds early seasoned with the main Points of Christianity, and were they and Servants thoroughly instructed in their Duty towards God, their *Neighbour* and *themselves*, much of the *Lewdness* and *Debauchery* which we groan under, and still complain of, would vanish and disappear. I beg you therefore, as you value your own Souls, and the Souls of those committed to your Charge; as you have any Consideration for the Public Good, or Concern for the Prosperity of your own Families, that you would use your best Endeavours to bring up your Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord, and to make your Servants God's Servants.

You are obliged to this both from Duty and Interest; for the Power and Authority God has given you over others, is a Talent entrusted with you for their Good: and you must certainly give a strict Account at the Day of Judgment, what use you have made of it, and how you have exercised it.

Besides,

Besides, by instilling Virtue and Piety into your Children and Servants, you take the best Method to secure the Obedience and Tractableness of your Children, and the Diligence and Fidelity of your Servants. For when all is done, our relative Duties in Life stand most firm upon Principles of Religion.

Let it be your Care therefore, that your Children be taught to read, and then to learn the *Church Catechism*, with some short Prayers for Morning and Evening, which you must oblige them constantly to use. Be very severe with them if they tell Lies, or betake themselves to pilfering Tricks, or lightly use the Name of God, especially if they swear by the sacred Name; or offend against Modesty by any filthy or obscene Words or Actions. Your Authority ought to influence and restrain them, till their Reason can discover the Advantages of Piety, and the Folly and Ingratitude of sinning against God, and breaking his holy Commandments. Indulgence in these Cases may be of fatal Consequence; for by letting the Reins of Government hang loose, Children will abandon themselves to the

Conduct of their Lusts and Passions, which they are most inclined to follow; and you will quickly repent that Fondness, which, by dear-bought Experience, will be found to have ruined your Children. Never omit carrying them with you to Church on the Lord's Day, and see that they behave themselves reverently at the Public Worship. But what I chiefly designed to recommend to you at present was, *Family Devotion*, by the constant Performance of Morning and Evening Prayer: and (if it may conveniently be) by reading a Psalm, and Chapter in the New Testament, before you begin that holy Exercise. This will be the best Means to preserve a Sense and Spirit of Religion and Virtue in your Households: I know of nothing that can more forward this, than the daily Exercise of *Family Devotion*, for by this Method they will be constantly put in mind of their Duty; for the Matter of it is contained in such Prayers. Besides, what they ask of God daily, they will think themselves obliged to use their utmost Endeavours to obtain. And upon this Condition, God promises the Influences of his Grace, which
(pro-

(provided we do our best) will always be ready to assist and strengthen us in the doing of his Will.

Of such *Families*, indeed, who live in a total Neglect of the *Worship* of God, may it not be almost said, that they live as *without God in the World*? They cannot, at least, answer for themselves, like *Joshua*, (ch. xxiv. 15.) *As for me, and my House, we will serve the LORD.* — However, that all Families may do this, there are many Helps to this Purpose in several Books; but for fear none of them may have come to your Hands, I thought fit to make this Provision for you by itself. If you, or any one in the Family, can read, let him or her take the Bible, and gravely read a Psalm, and a Chapter in the *New Testament*, and then distinctly and reverently on your Knees offer up the following Prayers to Almighty God. When Men are not inclined to *Exercises* of this Nature, it is easy to find Pretences and Excuses to avoid them; but if there be first a *willing Mind*, Time and Opportunity will seldom be wanting, even in their worldly Concerns: and the less so, if the Service of God

were reckoned, as in all Christian Families it ought, a necessary Part of every Day's Business. — However, fail not to let your Children get by Heart the two Prayers that are added for them; and do you stand by them sometimes, that they may learn to pray seriously and devoutly. When they are of a fit Age, go with them to your Minister, and desire him to prepare them for Confirmation, and afterwards for receiving the blessed Sacrament.



A Morning Prayer for a Family.

GREAT and glorious Lord God! *the High and Lofty One, who inhabitest Eternity, and dwellest in that Light which is not to be approached; we pray Thee to look down from Heaven, the Habitation of thy Holiness and thy Glory, upon us vile and sinful Creatures. Have Mercy upon us, O Lord, and according to the Multitude of thy tender Mercies blot out all our Transgressions: And do Thou keep it for ever in the Purpose and Resolution of our Hearts, to serve*
and

and fear Thee for the future, and to keep all thy Commandments always, that it may be well with us, and with our Children after us. We pray Thee, to this End, to write thy Laws in our Hearts, and to put thy Fear into our inward Parts, that we may never depart from Thee.

Grant us the Grace of thy holy Spirit, to become every Day better; to reform and amend whatsoever is amiss in the Frame and Temper of our Minds, or in the Course and Actions of our Lives; to enable us to mortify our Lusts; to govern our Passions, and to order our whole Conversation aright; to assist us in all that is Good; to keep us from all Evil, and to preserve us to thy heavenly Kingdom. We pray Thee to instruct us in all the Particulars of our Duty, which we owe to Thee and our Neighbour: *That we may herein exercise ourselves, to have Consciences void of Offence towards God and towards Man*; that we may love Thee, the Lord our God, with all our Hearts, with all our Souls, and all our Strength, and may love our Neighbour as ourselves; and whatever

we would that Men should do unto us, that we may do likewise unto them.

And let the Grace of God, which hath appeared unto all Men, and brings Salvation, teach us, that *denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we may live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present World, waiting for the blessed Hope, and glorious Appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.*

And we pray Thee make us sensible of our own Frailty, of the Shortness and Uncertainty of this Life, and of the Eternity of the next. Make us careful to live, as we shall wish we had done when we come to die. Let our Loins always be girded about, and our Lamps burning, and we ourselves like unto Men that wait for their Lord.

Extend thy Goodness to the whole World: Let thy Ways be known upon Earth, and thy saving Health among all Nations. Bless, we pray Thee, our Sovereign Lord King GEORGE, and all that are in Authority under him; that they may be useful and serviceable

to thy Glory, and the Public Good. We implore thy Mercy in the behalf of our Relations, Friends, and Benefactors. Forgive our Enemies, and teach us to return Good for Evil.

We offer unto Thee our hearty Praises for all thy Mercies bestowed upon us from Time to Time; for making us Christians; for preserving us the Night past, and the rest of our Lives, from innumerable Accidents and Dangers. Be graciously pleased to take us, and all Things belonging to us, into thy fatherly Care and Protection this Day. Let all thy Loving-kindnesses have this Effect upon us, to make us better, and to lead us to Repentance. And all this we beg for JESUS CHRIST his Sake; in whose blessed Name and Words we conclude our imperfect Prayers, saying,

Our Father, &c.

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us this Day, and evermore. *Amen.*



An Evening Prayer for a Family.

O God, who art the Giver of all good Gifts, and the Father of Mercies, we thine unworthy Servants entirely desire to praise thy Name for all the Expressions of thy Bounty towards us. Blessed be thy Love, that gave thy Son to die for our Sins, to put us in a Way of being happy, if we would obey Thee; and after all the wilful Refusals of thy Grace, still hast Patience with us, and hast added this one Day more to all we have mis-spent already, to see if we would finish the Work Thou hast set us to do, and fit ourselves for eternal Glory.

Pardon, good Lord, all our former Sins, and all our Abuses of thy Forbearance; for which we are now sorry at our Hearts; and give us Grace to lead more holy Lives, and to be more careful in improving all future Opportunities. Make thyself present to our Minds, and let thy Love and Fear rule in our Souls in all Places, and upon all Occasions.

Keep us chaste in all our Thoughts; temperate in all our Enjoyments; humble in all our Opinions of ourselves; charitable

charitable in all our Speeches of others; meek and peaceable under all Provocations; sincere and faithful in all our Professions; and so just and upright in all our Dealings, that no Necessity may force, no Opportunity tempt, nor Advantage of any kind may allure us to hurt any Body, by Word or Deed.

When thou bestowest Good on others, let us not envy, but rejoice in it; and when Thou addest any to ourselves, let us own thy Mercy, and humbly thank Thee for it. Afford us convenient Supplies in all our reasonable Necessities, and protect us against the Approach of all Dangers; make us diligent in all our Business, and give such Success to our Endeavours, as thou seest most expedient for us.

Teach us contentedly to submit, and not to repine at any Thing that comes upon us by the Allotment of thy wise Providence. And whilst we are in this World, and have manifold Concerns in it, suffer not our Hearts to be too much set upon it, but always fix our Eye upon the blessed Hope of Things above. And we pray Thee, make all the Things of this World minister to it, making
us

us careful above all Things to fit our Souls for that pure and perfect Bliss, which Thou hast prepared for all that love and fear Thee, in the Glories of thy Kingdom.

Charge thy holy Providence with us this Night; make our sleep safe and refreshing to us. Fit us for our great Change, that it may not surprise us un-awares; but that having led holy Lives, we may be happy in our Deaths, and have Comfort and well grounded Hope in Thee.

Extend thy Grace to all Men in all Places; to our Sovereign Lord King GEORGE, and all that are in Authority under him, both in Church and State; to High and Low, Rich and Poor; to all who pray for it or need it in these Kingdoms. Bless all our Friends, Relations and Benefactors. Forgive all our Enemies, give them Hearts to fear Thee, and to be reconciled to us. Supply us and all others, with whatsoever Thou seest proper for us, for Christ his Sake. In whose blessed Name and Words we still recommend ourselves unto Thee, saying,

Our Father, &c.

May

May the Grace of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us this Night, and evermore. *Amen.*



A Morning Prayer for a Child.

GLORY be to Thee, O Lord! for all the Blessings I daily receive from Thee; for thy particular Preservation and Refreshment of me this Night past.

Incline me to believe in Thee, to fear Thee, and love Thee with all my Heart; to worship Thee, and give Thee Thanks; to honour thy holy Name, and to serve Thee truly all the Days of my Life.

Make me to love my Neighbour as myself; and to do to all Men as I would they should do to me. Make me obedient to my Parents, and all my Governor in Church and State.

Grant, O Lord! that I may order myself lowly and reverently to all my Betters; that I may hurt no Body by Word or Deed; that I may keep my
Hands

Hands from Picking and Stealing, and my Tongue from Evil-speaking, Lying and Slandering; that I may keep my Body in Temperance, Soberness, and Chastity; that I may never covet nor desire other Mens Goods, but learn and labour truly to get my own Living, and to do my Duty in that state of Life unto which it shall please Thee, O Lord, to call me. And all this I beg for the Merits of *Jesus* my Saviour, in whose holy Words I sum up all my Wants, saying,
Our Father, &c.



An Evening Prayer for a Child.

O Lord God, my heavenly Father, I humbly implore the Pardon and Forgiveness of all the Sins I have committed this Day, either in Thought, Word, or Deed. Cleanse me from all my Wickedness, and strengthen my Weakness that I may overcome all the Temptations that daily surround me.

Assist me, good Lord, by thy Grace, that I may worship Thee, serve Thee, and obey Thee, as I ought to do. Sup-
 ply

ply me with all Things needful while I live in this World, and fit and prepare my Soul for the Happiness of the next. Make me to avoid all Occasions of offending Thee, and suffer me not to be tempted above what I am able; but defend me in all Dangers both of Body and Soul; keep me especially from Sin and Wickedness, and from my ghostly Enemy, and from everlasting Death.

I commend to thy divine Providence (*my Father and Mother, Brothers and Sisters*) all my Friends and Relations. Vouchsafe them all those Graces and Blessings Thou knowest most suitable for them.

O Thou that never sleepest, nor sleepest, watch over me this Night, and refresh me with reasonable Rest, that I may rise the next Morning more fit for thy Service.

I return, O Lord, to Thee all Praise and Thanksgiving, for all those Mercies which Thou hast this Day bestowed upon me. As long as I live let me praise the Lord; as long as I have any Being, let me magnify thy holy Name. Hear my Prayers, and accept of my Praises, for the Sake of my Saviour Je-
sus

fus Christ. In whose holy Words I sum
up all my Wants.

Our Father, &c.



A Prayer for a Servant.

O LORD God Almighty, whose
Loving-kindness is better than
Life, and whose Service is perfect Free-
dom: It is the wise Appointment of thy
Providence that there should be various
Orders and Degrees of Men, and that I
should be disposed of in the Station
where now I am. O Lord! I humbly
submit to thy good Pleasure, and desire
with Content and Thankfulness to ac-
cept of my Portion, how low and
mean soever in the World. If my
blessed Redeemer, who is Lord of all,
would *take upon him the Form of a Ser-
vant*, for our Sakes; O! why should I
refuse to be a Servant to others? If I
faithfully discharge the Duties of my
Place, I know I shall be as acceptable
to my God, as any that enjoy the
highest

highest Stations. If I be found in the Way of Righteousness, I shall be exalted in the World to come to everlasting Happiness and Glory. O let it not be so much my Care to get higher in the World, as to get more in thy Favour, wherein is Life. Suffer me not to be a Servant to Sin, or a Slave to any Lust; but grant me to enjoy *the blessed Liberty wherewith* Christ Jesus has made us free, that I may serve Thee, my God, faithfully, and run the Way of thy Commandments after Thou hast set my Heart at Liberty. Be thou pleased, O LORD, to fit me for, and assist me in the Service to which I am called, that I may perform it to the Glory of thy great Name, to the Satisfaction of those whom I serve, and to my own Advantage and Comfort. Make me true and faithful, careful and diligent, humble and obedient, doing the Business of my Place, *not with Eye-service as a Man-pleaser, but in Singleness of Heart, fearing God.* Teach me to deny myself, to be meek and patient, *not answering again* to stir up Wrath; but with Silence and Submission following the Things that
make

make for Peace. Suffer me not to wrong or cheat my Master, or do him any Damage for my own filthy Lucre, or fleshly Pleasure; that I may be found faithful in the Sight of my God, who evermore seeth in secret, and searcheth the very Heart. Whose Servant soever else I am, O LORD, let me ever be found in the Number of thine; and make me, I beseech Thee, such every Way towards Thee, that thou mayst mercifully accept me, and all my Services. Pardon and forgive all the Sins of my Life past, and grant me the Assistance of thy Grace and Holy Spirit, that I may serve Thee faithfully in this World, and at last be received into thy eternal Kingdom, through *Jesus Christ* our LORD, who has taught us when we pray, to say,

Our Father, &c.



Grace

Grace before Meat.

WE acknowledge thy Goodness, O Lord, in making this Provision for us. Bless us with a thankful Use of these thy Creatures, through JESUS CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

Grace after Meat.

BLessed be thy holy Name, O Lord, for supplying us with the Necessaries of Life. Let the Strength and Nourishment we receive be employed to thy Honour and Glory, through JESUS CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

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